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SENSITIVE
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AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN PASS TO AMEMBASSY GRENADA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 2019/12/29
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SUBJECT: GCOB REACTS TO EMBASSY OP-ED CRITICISM ON UN VOTING

REF: NASSAU 741; NASSAU 731; NASSAU 697

DERIVED FROM: DSCG 05-1 D

¶1. (C) The Embassy received the attached letter, press statement and explanation of vote from Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs (DPM) Brent Symonette on December 24. The letter and statement were issued in response to the Ambassador's op-ed, published in several of the local dailies on December 19 and 21, expressing disappointment at the change in GCOB position on several key human rights resolutions during the UN Third Committee.

¶2. (U) In coverage of the op-ed, the DPM told the media that The Bahamas voted against the no-action motions and abstained from the resolutions because they left out several countries that had been included the previous year. The GCOB press release claimed the Ambassador "misrepresented" GCOB position. The release highlighted the GCOB support of sanctions against the North Korea and Iran and explained that it's voting record on these resolutions has changed frequently because the content of the resolutions often changes from year to year. The GCOB reiterated that it does not condone wanton violations of human rights. The DPM wrote that the Ambassador of Iran had highlighted several factual errors in the resolution which were not rebutted by the co-sponsors. The GCOB also noted that the co-sponsors were not permitted to vote separately on the substantive paragraphs so that countries could express their positions on "controversial sections."

¶3. (C) Post requests USUN views on the GCOB's points and input for use with GCOB in future conversations.
AVANT